

From: Hawk's Nest Lodge  
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This letter of intervention is in reference to the new AVANGRID (CMP) transmission line corridor that is planned to be built over Coburn and Johnson Mountains. The corridor is in the view shed of our National Scenic Byway Rt. 201, through the full length of the West Forks, across the DOC and Trout Unlimited Cold Stream water shed, and across the Kennebec River Gorge in the West Forks in Somerset County.

The Hawk's Nest Lodge is concerned about the adverse economic impact created by the CMP project. The Hawk's Nest is highly dependent on the outdoor recreational tourist industry. In 2017 the Hawk's Nest had 15,890 visitors and on average employs 9-18 full and part time people in the area. Snowmobiling, ATV-ing, rafting, and kayaking, along with visitors to our Nat' scenic byway make up the bulk of the visitors.

It is our understanding that up to two years ago CMP contacted a single whitewater rafting outfitter in the Forks, which is a separate town not located in the Kennebec Gorge and began a mitigation process with an outside special interest group, the Western Mountains and Rivers Corp (WMRC) that led to a 22 million dollar Memorandum of Understanding. It appears the only host community in Maine to the new transmission line corridor, the **West Forks**, apparently was left out of that process. Both CMP and WMRC admitted this in an open public meeting in the West Forks after nearly two years.

Several businesses and organizations including the local ATV club, Snowmobile club, local fishing outfitters who make a living taking clients through the Kennebec River Gorge as well as the rest of the majority of whitewater rafting outfitters, town assessors, local paddlers, and basically everyone from the local area have been told they couldn't be part of the mitigation "or we would never get anything done", according to CMP and WMRC. It seems Trout Unlimited was also left out even though they were instrumental in the purchase of 8,000 acres of the Cold Stream watershed, one of the most important and fragile spawning habitats on the Kennebec for Maine wild brook trout. A good portion of that watershed is in the West Forks. The transmission line corridor passes through or directly over six miles of that watershed.

It seems that an honest and open dialog between the West Forks and CMP was simply not going to happen. From the perspective of residents and businesses in the West Forks as well as most outfitters, (both rafting and fishing), paddlers and their clubs, there is vehement opposition to high tension wires with 18 giant beach balls attached as guards for aircraft hanging over the Kennebec River Gorge. These are likely only the first of the transmission lines as the corridor is being built to include room for the future lines.. The profitable portion of the whitewater rafting industry is down to 12 weeks, yet, the season for private boating and fishing, is up to six months. Neither private boaters nor their representatives were not contacted. The recreation and tourism based economy and life style are 24/7/365 in the West Forks. A private outside special interest group dictating our future in the West Forks is out of the question when it comes to decisions of life changing impacts such as this.

In reference to the adverse environmental and view shed impacts of the Coburn Mountain area, Coburn Mt. is the highest peak between Mt. Katahdin, and the Sugarloaf/Bigelow Mt. area, with a

distance of nearly one hundred miles between. From the DOC observation tower on Coburn's peak the 360 degree view s from Canada to Katahdin, to Moosehead lake, the entire West Forks and well beyond are spectacular as is looking back at the mountain from anywhere in that view shed. Those views would also encompass miles of the transmission line corridor that come within a few hundred yards of Coburn's 3,718 ft. peak.

Coburn Mt. and ITS 89 are among the most visited destinations for snowmobiling in Maine with conservatively 10,000 snowmobilers in winter months, and a short hike for ATVers, and hikers. ITS 89 runs over the north shoulder of Coburn with open views from the Parlin Pond area throughout the West Forks, and , "Old Canada Road Nat. Scenic Byway" RT 201 a half mile away. The proposed transmission lines and their corridor run almost directly overhead of ITS 89 on the north shoulder as well as for miles before and after. The heavily traveled Johnson Mt. connector trail between Coburn and the West Forks used by both ATVs and snowmobiles will have the transmission lines either directly overhead or within nearby view. These Trails have unbroken scenic panoramic views to the horizon. ITS 89 is the only link for snowmobiles in northern Maine between the Ranglely area, past Grand Falls, over the 165 ft. Spencer Stream snowmobile bridge, and to the Jackman, Rockwood, West Forks, and Moosehead lake region. What has been called the Coburn Wilderness Trail will have miles of that transmission line corridor basically in your face or directly overhead. The Coburn Summit Riders were not contacted by CMP for any sort of mitigation.

These transmission lines are also visible from "Old Canada Road Nat. Scenic Byway" looking north from the top of Durgan Hill, the entire southern slope of Johnson Mt. and the North Shoulder of Coburn Mt. These mountain views will be gone for a lifetime. Hundreds of thousands of tourists traveling both north and south, between Quebec City, the beaches of costal Maine and beyond will be looking at miles of transmission lines. Any argument against that is simply wrong. The Old Canada Road Nat. Scenic Byway, with its mountains and rivers are the lifeblood to the West Forks. The OCR board of officers were not contacted for mitigation by CMP.

**What was CMP thinking when they quietly negotiated with a private outside special interest group for \$22 million in mitigation over a period of years without so much as a phone call to the one community in Maine sitting in the bulls eye of adverse environmental and economic impact? CMP with its billion dollar Trans Maine Power line corridor, (where tens of billions will be generated by a conglomerate in Canada producing the power)- a conglomerate based in Spain delivering the power to the state of Massachusetts- literally failed to take the West Forks into consideration. At this time there is growing momentum to have this transmission line corridor go the same way as the Dicky Lincoln Dam Project! There is neither a person, nor an entity that I am aware of in the West Forks, and beyond that is in favor of this corridor.**

There is also a growing sense that CMP approached one or two of the largest whitewater rafting outfitters two years ago, and began a conversation about purchasing the large campgrounds that these outfitters currently lease from CMP on the Kennebec River.

Decades ago CMP filed a lawsuit against the State of Maine PUC to raise the electrical rates over and above the rates allowed at the time by the MPUC. CMP shareholders wanted to recoup the losses CMP had to endure when forced to acquire lands and floodplains that could be affected by artificially raising and lowering water levels. The law that forced the purchase of the lands was called the Mills Act. CMP took the lawsuit to the Maine Supreme Court and won. The burden for the cost of the lands was forced on the CMP rate payer. The CMP rate payer effectively has stewardship over these lands, not the

CMP shareholders. These lands have some of the most beautiful and pristine waterfronts in the state, with a wealth of massive trees , and the last of Maine's old growth forests. Arguably, these lands belong to the people of the state of Maine.

The entire process reeks and needs to be more closely vetted by regulators as well as the office of the attorney general of the State of Maine. We in the West Forks ,and many other Mainers want to hear from the candidates running for Governor of Maine to see where they stand. The state of Maine should not allow a crack in its armor in the protection of our most precious lands and resources from outside special interest groups and mega conglomerates based outside of Maine and the U.S.

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